

NEW GUIDE
FOR THE
OVERLAND ROUTE
TO
CALIFORNIA.

— — — — —
BY ANDREW CHILD:

— — — — —
1852.

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OVERLAND ROUTE
TO
CALIFORNIA,

DESCRIPTION OF THE ROUTE, VIA

COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA;

KEEPING THE NORTH SIDE OF THE PLATTE RIV-
ER, FOR THE WHOLE OF THE DISTANCE,
LYING NEAR THAT STREAM;

THENCE OVER THE

SOUTH PASS,

VIA THE

GREAT SUBLETTE AND BEAR RIVER
CUT-OFFS, AND THE TRUCKEE
RIVER ROAD,

OVER THE

SIERRA NEVADA,

TO

SACRAMENTO VALLEY.

By Andrew Child, of Wisconsin.

MILWAUKEE:

DAILY SENTINEL STEAM POWER PRESS.

1852.



NEVADA CITY, UPPER CALIFORNIA,
December 10th, 1850.

DEAR BROTHER :

The following pages, which I send you, I have copied with much care from a daily record kept of the road and trip, and its correctness I will vouch for. The absence of any reliable guide-book, was a source of much inconvenience to the emigration of last season. Had the emigration known, at all times, the distance between grazing and watering places, and also the region where poisonous water abounds, their losses in stock would have been comparatively slight.

I here give the distances between those places, and advise where to cut grass, to assist upon the barren stretches, where none will be found.— Having travelled in the midst of an emigration, among whom, from different causes, mostly arising from an improper outfit, there was much suffering, I believe I am able to give some useful

ADVICE TO EMIGRANTS.

I will premise with the hint that the trip across the plains and mountains, is one of toil and hardships, and, with the best outfit, it would be a difficult matter indeed to metamorphose it into a

pleasant journey; yet much can be done to lighten the labor and enhance the comforts of the *voyager*, by a proper attention to his outfit, and by proper care of his stock after entering upon the road. The first item of importance is the TEAM. I believe it is generally conceded by those who have made the trip, that as safe, if not THE SAFEST animal that can be employed upon the road, is the Ox. His adaptation to subsist upon grass alone; his capacity for great endurance, and the comparatively low price at which he may be purchased—all recommend him to the favorable notice of the emigrant. Nor do his TRAVELLING qualities fall as far behind those of the horse or mule, as is generally supposed at home.

The trip has been made from St. Joseph, Mo., to Sacramento City, with cattle, in SEVENTY DAYS, and the instances are few indeed, where horses have performed it in less time.

I crossed the Great Sublette Cut-off, from Big Sandy River to Green River, a desert stretch of fifty-four miles, in twenty-two hours, travelling time, and there were mule and horse trains upon that road at the same time, which were six hours longer in crossing than we were.

I made the trip with oxen, and I should unhesitatingly choose them in preference to any other animal, had I the trip to make again.

For packing, mules or horses are, of course, preferable, but it is very questionable if the packer possesses advantages over the emigrant who travels with a wagon. The wagoner enjoys many comforts from which the packer is necessarily debarred, and, if not before, in case of sickness, the value of the wagon will be acknowledged by all.

Nor does the packer, with ALL EASE, leave the wagoner behind him. If he DOES, it ceases to be a query, whether an animal can, with more ease, on a tolerably smooth road, haul a load in an easy-running vehicle BEHIND HIM, or support the same, and carry it upon his back.

Packing is only an advantage in a very rugged country, where wagons cannot run. Now the road over which I traveled to California, is, for the most part, entirely different from such as above mentioned.

I traveled upon the Sierra Nevada mountains, in company with a train of packers, who left the Bluffs only ONE WEEK later than I did. They traveled the same route that I did, and during the last six weeks of our journey, we saw each other nearly every day.

But if we give the preference to cattle, it must be borne in mind that ALL cattle are not equally fitted for the journey. The BEST, (and such only should be taken,) are of medium size, with straight, clean made limbs and small joints.—Such will prove good travelers. They should be

not less than five years old, nor more than eight. The most desirable age is six or seven years.—Steers of less age than five years, rarely endure the fatigues of the trip, nor should any steer be taken that has not been broken, and well inured to labor at home.

The character of the team having been disposed of, a word must be said in relation to the WAGON. The provisions for NOT MORE than three persons should be hauled in ANY ONE WAGON, and that should be such an one as is known in Wisconsin as a light two-horse wagon. There should be no superfluous iron work about it, and the timber, particularly of the wheels, should be PERFECTLY SEASONED. To such a wagon, loaded only with provisions and a few articles indispensable upon the road, you should attach FOUR YOKE OF CATTLE. It is desirable in adjusting your load to your team, to arrange it so that the labor shall be only that of TRAVELING, and not of HAULING.

You should also be so situated that the loss of one or two steers would occasion no distress. To every wagon there should be AT LEAST ONE good grass-fed horse, (a Spanish mule is much preferable,) and two such animals are better than ONE, in proportion.

As the tastes of people differ, so will their stores of provisions; the following list is such an

one as I should take, had I the journey to re-perform; it is a store sufficient for three men :—

400 lbs. Flour,	100 lbs. Sugar,
75 " Indian Meal,	50 " Coffee,
200 " Butter Crackers	2 " Tea.
75 " Rice,	3 gallons Pickles in
250 " Hams and Side	Vinegar,
Bacon,	6 " Molasses.
75 " Dried Venison,	3 bush. Dried Fruit.
$\frac{1}{2}$ bush. Beans.	

In addition to the above, clothing, blankets, arms and amunition, and a small tent, only, should be taken. Shoes and nails for two yoke, if the team consist of four yoke of steers, will probably be needed. Many a valuable ox was left on the road the last season, for the want of a SINGLE SHOE.

Six, or at the most, eight wagons are as many as should travel together. Large companies should be avoided, as they occasion much unnecessary delay. The frontier should be left as soon as the grass has sufficiently advanced, and the emigrant should steadily pursue his journey, laying by only in rainy weather.

The route pursued in the following pages makes Council Bluffs, Iowa, the starting point.—This place is much nearer to the North-Western States than any other equally as eligible point of departure.

By traveling thence on the north side of the

Platte River, the emigrant will secure an abundance of grass for his stock, and escape the many diseases incident to the south side of the river.

A. C.

OVERLAND ROUTE

TO

CALIFORNIA.

MILES.

From TRADERS' POINT, on the Missouri River, over a high rolling country, to

6 GROVE AND CREEK on the left of the road ; to

3 CREEK — Banks high ; timber enough for camping purposes. Grass abundant.

8 CREEK—Steep and high banks.— Timber plenty. The creek is crossed just below the forks, on a tolerable Bridge.

4½ ELK HORN FORK of the Platte river ; plenty of timber about the river. Grass abundant.

8 MAIN PLATTE RIVER. The river is here wide and beautiful.—

29½

Some Cotton-wood and Willows along the bank. The bottom land is here very wide and fertile. Road here turns to right and runs

3 NEAR THE RIVER.

2 PAWNEE VILLAGE, south of river. Road lies over the bottom land, running in sight of river, to

25 SHELL CREEK.

23 LOUPE FORK of Platte river.—
The road to the Fork is most of the distance near to the Platte, and good camping places may be found at convenient intervals. The river here is deep, and must be ferried. There is a fording place one mile above, but it is not safe.

24 THE ROAD RUNS NEAR THE LOUPE. Camping places may be found on the river, by turning from the road. Elk, Antelope, and Buffalo, will now be often seen. The road here turns to the left, through the Bluffs, and leaves the river a short distance ; but returning, runs in sight of

106½

the Fork, gradually parting from it.

- 25 ROAD TURNS through Sandy Bluffs. To this point good camping places may be found without difficulty. Road very sandy and heavy upon teams. Five miles to

- 5 GOOD LEVEL ROAD. Fifteen miles further you reach

- 15 PRAIRIE CREEK. The upper ford is much the best water, which is two feet deep. Good water and plenty of grass, but no timber.

- 1 CREEK. Water one foot deep, and half a mile further another

- ½ CREEK, from which you travel ten miles, to the

- 10 FORD OF WOOD RIVER, where it is one rod wide, and easily forded in ordinary stages of water. Grass good. Some timber on the river. The road is excellent, and runs near the Platte river for twenty-one miles, to

- 21 PRAIRIE DOG TOWN AND SWAMP, on south of road.

184

15 TWO DEEP RAVINES, near together, to the second

3½ CREEK, usually easy to ford, and sometimes dry. Six miles further on, you come to a

6 DRY CREEK, and three miles further on is

3 ELM CREEK. This creek is usually dry, but on June 5th, 1850, we found it with twelve feet of water, and bridged it. Excellent grass on the west side of the creek, with abundance of timber. After going seven miles further, the

7 ROAD LEAVES THE RIVER, from which place it is four miles to the

4 FORD OF BUFFALO CREEK. Deep banks, but not bad to cross.— After travelling thirteen miles, the

13 ROAD RUNS NEAR THE RIVER. Good places to camp are found during the last named distance. Seven miles further on, you come to a

235½

7 SMALL LAKE on the left of road.
Seven miles further

7 THE ROAD APPROACHES AND
LEAVES RIVER. One mile on is a

1 LAKE, south of road. Two and a
half miles further is the bed of a

2½ DRY CREEK, and fourteen miles
from here you come to

14 ROLLING SANDY LAND. Af-
ter traveling three miles,

3 ROAD LEAVES THE RIVER—
from which place it is seven and a half
miles to

7½ SKUNK CREEK crossing. Two
and a half miles on is a

2½ LAKE on the left of road, from
which place four miles brings you to a

4 LARGE COLD SPRING, on the
south of the road and a few rods from
it, opposite to an amphitheatre formed
by high bluffs. The bluffs on river
side are high and precipitous, and from
them a beautiful view may be had.—
This point is about opposite the junc-
tion of the North and South forks of

the Platte river. Five miles further on from this spring you will come to a

- 5 WIDE CREEK. Good grazing, but no timber; and five miles from this creek (which is easy to ford) you will find the road runs

- 5 NEAR THE PLATTE RIVER. Go three and a half miles and you will see

- 3½ WILLOWS, SOUTH OF THE ROAD. These are the last species of timber of any kind, on the north side of the river, for a distance of two hundred miles, except *one Cedar tree*.—Buffalo Chips will be found in abundance, and when dry, they answer a good purpose for fuel. From the willows, you go on two miles, and reach a

- 2 CREEK WITH HIGH BANKS. Good crossing. From this creek one and a half miles, you will see

- 1½ ISLANDS IN RIVER, upon which are plenty of low willows. The stream is easily waded. The road continues over a low country for several miles

301

from here. After going two miles you come to a

2 MUDDY CREEK, where the water is tolerably good, but the feed poor.— The road runs

2 NEAR THE RIVER, after which you *leave* the river for about seven miles, (during which you will find but little grass,) when you reach

7 BLUFF FORK OF RIVER. — This fork is about six rods wide and eighteen inches deep ; rather steep on the east bank, but good to ford. Here we saw an immense number of Buffalo. No place to camp. After getting along one and a half miles,

1½ ROAD ASCENDS THE SANDY BLUFFS. Road very winding, but tolerably firm. It continues on these bluffs for four and a half miles, when you reach

4½ LOW LAND. Tolerably good grass may be found here. Four miles further, you strike

4 SOFT SANDY BLUFFS, which

322

322

are very hard upon teams. After one and a half miles from here you reach

1½ BLUFF CREEK. The road descends to the bottom land, where it is good. You will here find good water and good grass, but scant in places.— Six miles of this road and you reach

6 THE SECOND SOFT SANDY BLUFFS, where the road is again hard upon teams for two and a half miles, and

2½ ROAD DESCENDS TO LEVEL GROUND. Here there is a good spring and small creek. The spring is clear and cold. The creek runs from it, and crosses the road. Abundance of excellent grass. After leaving this spot, one mile and a quarter on is a

1½ NARROW CREEK — water one foot deep. One mile and a quarter on is a

1½ SPRING CREEK, and one mile further on you come to a

334½

334½

1 SLUGGISH CREEK or SLOUGH, which is twenty feet wide, and (including mud) about two feet deep.— The road here runs for a little distance over deep sandy rolling land, to the bottom again, which is low and wet.— After crossing four spring streams, (of good water) from last named point say eight miles and a half, you will arrive at

8½ RATTLESNAKE CREEK, which is one rod and a half wide, two feet deep, and easy to cross. Opposite this creek, the Cedar Bluffs commence on the south side of the river, and continue three miles. From Rattlesnake Creek it is seven miles to a

7 SANDY CREEK, which is six feet wide, and of good water. After crossing five small creeks, (all of good water,) say about ten miles and a half, is

10½ WOLF CREEK, which is about six yards wide, and fordable. The road now passes over sandy bluffs for four miles, to a

361½

2

361½

4 SMALL CREEK, two feet deep.—
Road now runs near to river. Four
miles and a half on, is the

4½ LONE TREE, a large white Cedar,
which stands a little south of the road.
Three miles on is

3 ASH HOLLOW—south of river.—
Three miles from here you come to

3 QUICKSAND CREEK, about 30
yards wide, and rather bad to cross on
account of quicksand.

4½ CASTLE BLUFFS, south of river.
Thirteen miles more brings you to

13 SANDY BLUFFS. Half a mile
over these is the bottom land. The
road now crosses three dry creeks, in
a distance of five miles, and runs near
to river for three miles, to a

8½ SHOAL CREEK, one mile and a
half from which is a

1½ POND OR LAKE, south of road,
which is now sandy, for most of the
way, many miles. After five miles
travel, you reach

5 COBBLESTONE BLUFFS.—

408½

Chimney Rock may be seen in the distance. From here it is two miles and a quarter to where

2½ ROAD DESCENDS, and in twelve miles further the

12 ROAD JOINS THE RIVER.—

Good camping grounds can be found along the river, which runs near the road for eight miles, when you come to

8 SANDY ROLLING LAND, or low bluffs. It is one mile over these to low land, and fourteen miles to

15 CHIMNEY ROCK, on the south side of river. From here it is twenty miles to

20 SCOTT'S BLUFF, which is also on the south side of the river. Road runs near to the river, and it is four miles to

4 COLD CREEK, which is twelve feet wide and one foot deep. This stream is upon the left of the road; you do not cross it, but travel near it a short distance.

469½

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13 GOOD CAMP GROUND near the river. The road is now quite sandy for twenty miles. From last point it is sixteen miles to

16 TIMBER. Road runs near to river for some miles, varying from one quarter to one mile and a half distant. From timber it is five miles to a

5 CREEK, and from here twelve miles to the

12 RIVER OPPOSITE FORT LARAMIE. The Fort is a mile and a half west of the river, on Laramie Fork, a beautiful and clear stream that flows into the north fork of the Platte, from the south-west. The Platte is here sometimes fordable, but more often otherwise, and owing to the great rapidity of its current, it is unsafe to ford, except in very low stages of water. The route we followed from this point was still upon the *north side* of the river, which route was then (June, 1850) untraveled and unknown. We, however, encountered no serious obstacle, and gained two

5153

days in time upon those who here crossed to the south side, as nearly all of the emigration did. By this route we avoided twice crossing the Platte, and also the dreaded Black Hills of the south side. It must be added, however, that in very wet seasons, this route would be impracticable, on account of deep creeks, which we found dry. But in any *ordinary* season, as late as June 15th, I believe it to incomparably better than via the Black Hills of the south side. Four miles from the Fort is a

4 DRY CREEK and short steep ascent. The road the above distance runs near to river. It now leaves it for fourteen miles. Four miles and a half from "Dry Creek," is

4½ ENTRANCE TO PASS between mountains. The road to this point is, in many places, sidling and stony.

2½ GOOD COLD SPRINGS on the right of road, near to some young Cotton-wood trees.

7 ROAD JOINS RIVER. The last

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533½

seven miles is over a very rolling country. This point is a good place to camp, there being an abundance of cotton-wood timber, grass, and a spring which crosses the road. After leaving the last named point seven miles and a half, you come to

7½ FINE BOTTOM between hills.—

Some steep and bad descents before arriving at this place, but we overcame them without difficulty, by careful driving. One mile and a half further you come to

1½ ALDER CLUMP on the left of road. Opposite to this is a spring of very cold water. Grass and wood is also here abundant. After a steep ascent from this place, the road is very sideling, over a flint and cobblestone hill, for one mile, to a

1 GOOD ROAD. This continues for three miles, gradually descending to a

3 CREEK, and one mile further is a

1 DEEP CREEK, which has a muddy bottom, but is not very bad to cross.—

547½

547½

For the next eight miles the road is tolerably good, but sandy in places, to the

8 RIVER. Here is good camping ground and plenty of timber and grass. The road is now rough, and after leaving river for four miles, it again

4 DESCENDS TO RIVER. The flat land near the river is sandy and barren, and the steep banks make it difficult to water teams. Four miles from here is a little feed near the river. Ten miles further is a

10 STEEP AND CRAGGY ASCENT
Road mountainous. Five miles from here the

5 ROAD DESCENDS near to river. The road lies over a high rolling, and generally barren country, and is for the next fifteen miles, in sight of the river much of the distance, when you reach

15 LOW LAND bordering upon river. Here the grass improves, and in three miles more you reach the

589½

589½

3 FERRY OF THE PLATTE.—

Road much of the way is rough, and feed scarce for nineteen miles, when you come to the

- 19 UPPER FERRY. There is some feed upon the river side. From this place there is *no water that is not poisonous*, and very little grass for twenty-six miles. You soon leave the Platte river, and see it no more. The road is over a very barren, mountainous country, but is smooth and hard.— When the wind blows (which it usually does here,) the *dust* is intolerable. Thirteen miles from upper ferry is a

- 13 SPRING AND LAKE. Water bad. Thirteen miles further is a

- 13 SMALL STREAM, to left of road. Water brackish, and not relished by either man or beast. Plenty of grass near the stream. In three miles more you arrive at

- 3 WILLOW SPRINGS, on right of road. A number of springs of excellent cold water, near to willow bushes. Good Grass. One mile to

640½

6403

1 PROSPECT HILL. From here the Rattlesnake mountains can be seen. In three miles you come to

3 GRASS AND WATER, and in four miles and a half more, to a

4½ CREEK on left of road. Here we found some grass and a little water, but no wood. The road from here is very *sandy* to Independence Rock.— Two miles to

2 GREASE-WOOD CREEK. No feed. Between here and the Sweetwater river there is much alkali water standing in pools, and it is *sure death* for cattle to drink it, unless they are immediately attended to. Great care should be taken to keep them from it, particularly loose stock. From last named creek it is eleven miles to

SWEETWATER RIVER, a swift and clear stream. Grass upon its banks. One mile to

1 INDEPENDENCE ROCK. We found the grass by the river quite used up, and at this place we found tolera-

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ble feed, three miles from the river, toward the mountains on the north.— There is a large *Alkali Lake* one mile from the river, in the same direction, which must be carefully avoided.— The river we forded at this point. It is from two to three feet deep. It is five miles from the “Rock” to the

- 5 DEVIL'S GATE. This is one of the great natural curiosities of the trip. It is a deep canon in the Rattlesnake mountains, through which the little Sweetwater tumbles its waters, in places completely filling the gap from side to side. The mountain walls rise perpendicularly from the river to a height of from 300 to 400 feet. A few miles south of the road, snow-capped mountains may be seen. If there is no feed upon the river, it may be found south of here, towards the mountains. The road runs along side the river for ten miles from this point, and feed is pretty plenty. After crossing two creeks which run into the riv-

668½

668½

er from the south, six miles of travel brings you to a

7 CREEK AND RAVINE, where you will find grass, but no timber.— Your main dependence for fuel along this river, will be deserted wagons, and the wild sage, which latter is about the only representative of the vegetable kingdom found upon the high land. In four miles the

4 ROAD LEAVES THE RIVER, and passes over a sandy and barren tract. After seven miles travel, during which you cross another ravine, you find

7 ROAD NEAR TO RIVER again. You will pass a deep creek, usually dry, before arriving here. At this place is a dry creek, upon which is some timber. The road again leaves the river, and after seven miles further, the

7 ROAD NEARS THE RIVER again. You will now ford the river three times within the next two miles, when the road again

693½

693½

2 LEAVES RIVER, and in eight miles you again come to

8 RIVER AND FORD. Road again leaves the the river, and there is no good water (though you will find good grass,) for seventeen miles and a half, when you will come again to the

17½ RIVER AND FORD. Good grass and willows will be found for fuel.— Four miles again, and

4 RIVER AND FORD, and in half a mile further the

½ RIVER IS RE-FORDED. In half a mile more you come to

½ BRANCH OF RIVER. Three miles further is a

3 SPRING CREEK, and a fair place to camp. After two miles travel, the

2 ROAD LEAVES THE RIVER.—

As the road ascends from the bottom land, there are a number of springs of excellent water on the left of the road, in the bank. After two miles and a half, you strike

760½

7303

2½ ROUGH AND VERY ROCKY RIDGES. Seven miles to

7 STRAWBERRY CREEK, which is a branch of the Sweetwater. Good camping ground.

4 BRANCH OF RIVER. Good camping ground.

2½ WILLOW CREEK. Good camping ground. In five miles you come to the

5 SWEETWATER RIVER, for the last time. Here also is good camp ground. In ten miles you reach the

10 SOUTH PASS—Summit. (Three miles before you reach this place, and immediately after passing the Koin Mounds, is a good spot to camp, a little distance north of road.) This is the dividing point between the waters of the two oceans. The altitude is about 7100 feet. In three miles more you reach

3 PACIFIC SPRINGS and CREEK. Here is a great abundance of grass, but the ground is in many places very

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764½

miroy. Water good. Four miles north of this place, toward the snowy mountains, is plenty of grass which can be cut, (in case you can find none rank enough, any nearer,) and it will be well for emigrants to lay in a few sacks, to assist their teams upon the Great Cut-off, upon which they will enter at the Big Sandy River. From last point (Pacific Springs,) it is one mile and a half to a

1½ CROSSING OF CREEK. Rather bad to cross. Grass plenty. After leaving this creek there is no water fit to use, for twenty-three miles.— From here it is fifteen miles to the

15 JUNCTION OF ROADS. The left hand road leads to Salt Lake, the other is the Great Sublette Cut-off, by taking which, three or four days travel can be saved. Of course we take the latter, and from here it is seven miles to

7 LITTLE SANDY RIVER. — This is one of the tributaries of the great *Colorado*, which flows into the

788½

788½

Gulf of California. Some grass and willows are here found. After six miles travel, you reach

- 6 BIG SANDY RIVER. Good grass and willows, in places. After leaving this stream you enter upon a dry region, and will find no water until you arrive at Green River, a distance of fifty-four miles. Emigrants will do well to rest a day at this place. It is the usual, and perhaps the *best way*, to leave Big Sandy River by three or four o'clock, P. M., and travel steadily until you arrive at Green River, stopping only long enough to rest your teams a little, and to water them.—We were twenty-four hours in crossing from river to river, but the usual time occupied was from twenty-seven to twenty eight hours. The road is over an undulating country, with some high hills, and is, with a few exceptions, hard and pretty good, but we found the dust quite annoying.

- 54 GREEN RIVER. Plenty of grass after crossing the river, but none on

848½

848½

the east side. Beware of Alkali water on the low land. If the grass is grazed down on the bottom land, near the ferry, you will find abundance on the banks of a stream that flows into the river, a mile and a half above the upper ferry. It is now twelve miles to the

- 12 FIRST BRANCH OF GREEN RIVER. The road to this is over a very mountainous, but not bad road. The grass is good and abundant, but there is alkali water on the bottom.— We traveled up the stream two miles, forded the branch twice, and left the bottom. From the first branch it is twelve miles to

- 12 ASPEN CREEK. A few noble fur trees stand upon a hill, just above the creek. Here is plenty of dry wood, but little grass. After leaving here, the road is ascending and very steep for a few miles. Seven miles from the creek, the

- 7 ROAD FORKS. The right hand is a *camp road*, and not as direct as

879½

879½

the other. Four miles from this place, the road again

- 4 FORKS. Take the left hand one; it is less mountainous than the other. The mountain tops along here are covered with snow, and their sides in many places with magnificent fir trees.— The mountains begin to assume a more cheerful aspect, and, in comparison with those left behind, are even fertile. From last forks of road, it is six miles and a quarter to

- 6½ SECOND BRANCH OF GREEN RIVER. Grass is here abundant and excellent. Little or no poisonous water. After leaving the branch, there is a very long and tedious ascent.— The road, for most of the distance of twenty-five miles, is very mountainous, and in some places the descents are precipitous, and miles in length. The country along here is well watered.— From second branch it is thirteen miles to

13 FIR GROVE AND HILL. Road
902½ 3

902½

passes through the grove. Five miles further is a

- 5 BROOK, at the foot of a very long and tedious descent. We found good feed half a mile to right of road, one mile from this brook, after ascending the hill. The ascent is bad. At the above named distance is a spring of water on the right of road, and wild sage for fuel, making it a tolerable camping place. From the Brook last named, after leaving the mountains and crossing two small streams, it is eleven miles (in all) to

- 11 THOMAS' FORK OF BEAR RIVER. Feed pretty good. Willows plenty. You ford the stream three times, after which you encounter a very rocky road. From the above named fork it is six miles to

- 6 BEAR RIVER. Excellent grass. Level and fine road, through a fertile valley, for fourteen miles, to

- 14 TULICK'S FORK OF BEAR RIVER. We traveled six miles out of our

938½

938½

way to cross. At a little distance from the fork you enter the mountains.—The road over them, is, in many places, bad and steep, both ascending and going down. In one place the road lies between high rocks, where there is barely room for a wagon to pass.—The country from Tulick's Fork is well watered. After a very long and steep descent, you reach

8 THE RIVER, and good grass.—

The road passes along the river valley, where there is an abundance of feed, and cold springs and streams are met with every few miles. You leave the bottom, the road winding between the

20 HIGH BLUFFS. One mile after the road leaves the bottom, a ravine makes down to the river on the left of road. Near to the river is excellent grass in abundance, and a cold brook, which has its origin in a large spring, near the road. This is a fine place to camp. The road from here runs thro' the high bluffs for three miles, to the

966½

966½

low bluffs bordering on river. Plenty of good water along the road, and excellent grass near the river.

- 17 SODA SPRINGS, on the right of road. They may be easily known by the large white mounds made by the mineral of the water. Visit them.— This water when sweetened and mixed with acid, makes a fine effervescing drink. Here a fine stream crosses the road, and soon after a branch of the river must be forded, after passing through a grove of Cedars. Upon this branch, about sixty yards on the left of the road, is the celebrated Steamboat Spring. The road here passes over a barren tract of table land, bordering upon the river, but high above and with mountains upon each side, to

- 7 JUNCTION OF ROADS, (say 7 miles from Soda Springs aboved named.) The road leading to the right is the old *Fort Hall* road; the *left hand* is the Meyer's or *Bear River Cut-off*. We followed the latter. You here

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9901₂

leave Bear river. One mile south of the road is an old crater of an extinct Volcano, and the face of the country, at this point, is unmistakeable evidence that the Volcano has had its day of triumph. It is thirteen miles from this point to water. After a slight descent in the road, it passes over interval land between the mountains.

The road is excellent and grass abundant. From last named junction of roads it is nine miles to

9 PASS BETWEEN MOUNTAINS.

About three miles from the entrance to mountains, the

3 ROAD FORKS. Keep the *left hand*; the other is almost impassable in places. One mile to a

1 COLD SPRING AND BROOK, and after traveling half a mile further, you come to a

$\frac{1}{2}$ LARGE RAPID STREAM.—Water as cold as ice. The road thus far upon the mountains, is good, and con-

tinues so for one mile further. It then passes through a

1 WET GULLY, between the hills and for half a mile is very bad. By turning short to the left, upon a new track, and ascending the steep bluff, much of the worst of it can be avoided. Two miles and a half further is a long and

2½ STEEP DESCENT, and half a mile more is

3 PANNACK RIVER, which is a tributary to the Columbia river. After ascending the bluffs, (first crossing the river,) the road runs in sight of river, and four miles from last named point, it

4 TURNS TO THE LEFT. You will find good grass all along the river side to this place. Road is now over a good mountain track, for eight miles, to

8 FALL CREEK, then over bluffs one mile, then over intervale land three miles more, to

1020

4 MOUNTAIN, and after five miles, you reach a

5 MOUNTAIN SPRING. Half a mile beyond a Cedar grove on a summit, (a mile and a half from the last spring) is a

1½ SMALL STEAM. After a long descent, cross small ridge and two creeks, within quarter of a mile.— Good mountain road to crossing of a

6 SPRING BROOK. A spring on left of road. After two miles more, you come to

2 WILLOW CREEK. Two crossings within one quarter of a mile.— Travel near the creek for one mile and a half. Grass for the last nine miles has been abundant. Over a good road for eight miles, to

8 BIG SPRING CREEK, which you will cross. This creek runs from a large, fine spring, about eighty rods from the road. Travel within half a mile of the creek, for a mile and a

1046½

1046½

half, and then over a good mountain road for three miles. From the above spring it is seventeen miles and a half to the first water, and twenty-five miles before you will find that commodity near the road. By observing future directions, water will be found at the first named distance. From spring it is four miles and a half to

4½ DESCENT TO RAVINE. Follow this three miles and a half, to

3½ SUMMIT OF MOUNTAIN. — Long, precipitous, and bad descent, for one mile, and for three miles further it is a good mountain road to

4 INTERVAL between mountains.

6 ROAD ASCENDS THE BLUFFS. A little distance before this, camp roads lead off to the left, and a mile distant from the road is an excellent spring of water. It is not, however, sufficient to water stock. Half a mile above the spring is a fine run, where your teams can drink. Mountain road to

1064½

1064 $\frac{1}{2}$

7 $\frac{1}{2}$ SPRING CREEK, on the left of, and near to the road. This creek flows from several cold springs. For 4 miles further it is a mountain road to a

4 RAVINE. Two miles from this is a spring on the left, and in four and a half miles you reach the

4 $\frac{1}{2}$ SUMMIT OF MOUNTAIN. The road ahead is well watered. It winds between the mountains for twelve miles to an

12 INTERVAL of low rolling land, and in two miles further to

2 CROSSING OF BROOK. From here over a very dusty road for eleven miles to a

11 BRANCH OF RAFT RIVER.— All the last eleven miles is *without* water. It is five and a half miles more to the

5 $\frac{1}{2}$ SECOND BRANCH OF RAFT RIVER. There is good feed upon both the above streams. Old road

1111

from Fort Hall intersects. In five miles you reach

- 5 SECOND FORD OF ABOVE, and after leaving this ten miles, you come to a

- 10 SPRING CREEK, which crosses the road. Here is good grass. In three and a half miles more is a

- 3½ SECOND SPRING CREEK.— Good grass. The road for the last twelve miles has passed over interval land, lying between the ridges of the Great Basin. In one and a half miles you come to a

- 1½ RAPID CREEK. Here is an abundance of grass and sage. In four miles you come to

- 4 CROSSING OF MUDDY CREEK, and three and a half miles further you come to

- 3½ STEEPLE ROCKS. There is hardly room to allow the passage of a wagon between these rocks, which are upon the summit of a mountain. Before arriving at this summit, you will

1138½

pass many large, disconnected, and curious shaped rocks. From summit it is one mile to where

1 THE NORTHERN SALT LAKE ROAD intersects, and from here you will find, in five miles, a

5 ROCK SPRING AND CREEK.

Spring on right of road, near to summit of high hills. The road from here is very mountainous, bad, and sideling in places. Some of the mountains between the above and Goose Creek, are higher than the South Pass at the summit.

7½ BRANCH OF GOOSE CREEK.

Immediately before descending to the branch, you will be obliged to hold up your wagons by manual force, to prevent them from capsizing. There is little feed near the branch, until it passes between the Bluffs two miles further.

2 ROAD RISES STEEP BLUFF,
and one mile and a half more is

1154

1½ GOOSE CREEK. You now go seventeen miles

17 UP GOOSE CREEK. The road passes over the Bluffs twice, returning again to Creek, on which is abundance of grass. Whenever you can make hay upon this Creek, you will gain by doing so. Put up enough for at least one good feed. There is no grass of consequence for nearly thirty miles.

4 UP GOOSE CREEK BRANCH. Road in places is rough, bad and rocky. In twelve miles you reach

12 THOUSAND SPRINGS AND CREEK. The creek sinks three miles from the spring. It is now nine miles down the valley to

9 BLUFFS, and three miles over the Bluffs to

3 VALLEY. Some grass of ordinary quality. No water. In three miles more you come to

3 POOR WATER, and in six miles further is

1203½

- 6 GOOD RUNNING WATER, and excellent grass in abundance. Six miles to
- 6 BOILING SPRING, and five miles further to
- 5 GREAT COLD SPRING. Road to spring good, and a limited amount of grass near it, by the head of the brook. Four miles further the
- 4 ROAD FORKS. Keep to the *left*, the other road is seven miles further, and not as good. Five miles to
- 5 HUMBOLDT SPRINGS. Grass and sage. Spring on the left of road. Seven miles over rolling land to
- 7 VALLEY on the left Here is an abundance of coarse grass. No water for six miles further. Go nineteen miles down the valley to the
- 19 FIRST FORD OF THE HUMBOLDT. Good feed all along the river, and excellent roads. From the first ford it is eighteen miles to

1235½

1255½

- 18 FORD OF BRANCH, which flows down a valley from the North. Here the road passes over the bluffs to avoid the river Canon, but soon returns to the bottom land. It crosses the bluffs three times within the next five miles, but soon returns to the river in each case. Look out for the

DIGGER INDIANS. They live all along on this river, and are a thieving set of rascals. They will steal or shoot your stock, and although they appear friendly, they will not scruple to take your *scalp*, if you are within their power. From Ford of Branch it is nineteen miles to

- 19 SECOND FORD of HUMBOLDT, and four miles to

- 4 FOURTH FORD of HUMBOLDT. The interval between the mountains is narrow, and does not afford much feed. In some places the bluffs are so precipitous, as to crowd the road quite into the river. From Fourth Ford it is six miles to the

1296½

1296½

6 CROSSING of a COLD CREEK.

Between the Fourth Ford and this creek, the road passes over two ridges and one small creek. In one mile and a half the

1½ ROAD LEAVES RIVER, and in seventeen miles more the

17 ROAD STRIKES THE RIVER.

The road in many places is either rocky, steep, or very dusty. Upon the last stretch there are no good watering places for stock. There are a few small springs on the way. In some places there is scattering bunch grass. Where the road strikes the river, there is a track continuing on the mountain side, and another that crosses the river and passes down it. The ford is a good one, and also the road. We crossed the river, and travelled down it sixteen miles, to the

16 BASE OF MOUNTAIN, and in a mile and a half more

1¼ OVER THE RIDGE. Road runs

1338½

1338½

within two or three miles of river, winding around the base of the mountain, and after fourteen miles, turns toward the south, on to

14 LEVEL GROUND. The road is here level, and runs within sight of the river, inclining toward the west. Finally, after twenty-five miles it touches the

25 RIVER. Road runs within sight of river fourteen miles, to

14 POINT OF MOUNTAIN. Road passes over the mountain, and in eight miles more reaches the

8 RIVER. The ascent to the above named mountain is steep, and the summit is stony. A fine level road for eighteen miles, when you come in

18 SIGHT OF THE RIVER. At this place is a large meadow of many hundred acres, covered with a luxuriant growth of excellent grasses. From here will find very little grass, (and none, if you are not among the first of

1417½

1417½

the emigration,) for a distance of *ninety miles* (90), and to preserve your teams, you must fill *all* your surplus room with hay. Hundreds of head of stock were lost upon this desert stretch the past season, Emigrants not knowing where it commenced. Road winds to the south seven miles

7 OVER A LOW MOUNTAIN to the River. Five miles to a

5 STEEP DESCENT. Road runs near to the River. In some places it is very sandy and heavy upon teams. It is six miles to the

6 SECOND STEEP DESCENT.— Road continues sandy in places, and is oppressively dusty. Runs near to river. It is three and a half miles to a

3½ VERY STEEP ASCENT, and in two and a half miles more it

2½ DESCENDS TO RIVER. The road from the ascent makes a semi-

1441½

1441½

circular sweep over very sandy land, to avoid bluffs near river. In ten miles it again comes

10 NEAR TO RIVER, and much of the way here is very sandy. Road now crosses a high sandy plain, which is *very barren for twenty miles*, to

20 RIVER. *No water* is to be had upon the above road. You now travel over a very barren country, which is most of the way covered with a deep, ashy dust, for nineteen miles, in sight of the river, to a

19 FORD. The road to the ford runs down between high bluffs. The ford is not a bad one. You can, if you choose, keep down to the *sink*, on the south side of river. Distance is about the same. We crossed. Road on the N. W. side of river is over a desert region, for eight miles, to a

8 WATERING PLACE, and from here, six miles on,

6 ROAD CROSSES A SLOUGH,
1504½

1504½

at the head of which is a spring of cool and tolerably good water. From here it is four miles to the head of a

4 GREAT MEADOW. You will now find good grass for ten miles, and must here prepare yourself with hay for the desert. In sixteen miles, you reach

16 HUMBOLDT LAKE. The water, a little distance from the shore, is barely drinkable. You had better fill your water vessels at the head of the meadow, where it is much better. Road passes around the Lake, keeping near it, and the long sloughs beyond it, twenty miles, where the

20 ROAD FORKS. The road leading to the *right* is the *Truckee* road, and the other the *Carson*. We turn to the right and move on to the *Desert*. The road passes over a rolling and rather rough country for twenty miles, to

20 BOILING SPRINGS. These are
1564½

1564½

a great curiosity. The largest spring is confined in a basin of rock, six feet long and four feet wide, and the water, which is of the *boiling temperature*, is about two feet deep. At intervals of about five minutes, the water is thrown to a height of three or four feet, accompanied by a hissing and rumbling sound, which continues about half a minute. The water is strongly impregnated with mineral, and is not fit to use. When made into tea or coffee it is barely drinkable, but not healthy. Nearly all who drank of it suffered from its effects. It is twenty-three miles to

23 TRUCKIE or SALMON TROUT RIVER. Road for the last ten miles is very sandy, and heavy upon teams. The river water is cold and excellent. It rises within five miles of the summit of the Sierra Nevada, and empties into Pyramid Lake. You cross it near its mouth. From here the road passes up the river. It has been usual to ford the river twenty or thirty times

1587½

1587½

within as many miles, to avoid the walls of rock. These fords are all very bad, the river being a rapid stream, and its bottom covered with large rocks. By following the *mountain road*, all of these fords but eight (8) may be avoided. There is abundance of excellent grass along the river side. From Truckie river it is thirty miles to

30 GREAT TRUCKIE MEADOW, which is ten miles across it. After leaving it, you enter upon a barren plain five miles across. After this is passed, you reach the

15 RIVER. You must here ford. The banks are steep. It is from here three miles to the

3 SEVENTH FORD OF RIVER. This is the worst ford of the river, on account of large rocks. Road now leaves river for seven miles, to the

7 LAST CROSSING OF THE RIVER. Plenty of grass. Road passes over the mountains seven miles, to

1642½

1642 $\frac{1}{2}$

7 COLD CREEK AND VALLEY.

Grass, timber, and cold water. Mountain road twelve miles, to a

- 12 TRIBUTARY of TRUCKIE RIVER, which is a fine stream, with grass and timber on its banks. In nine miles more you come to a

- 9 SMALL VALLEY and BRANCH, and ten miles more, to

- 10 SECOND VALLEY & BRANCH, near the foot of Truckie Lake. Abundance of grass and timber, and excellent water. About one mile east of this, on the left of the road, are the remains of the cabins of the unfortunate Donner party. Six miles to

- 6 FOOT OF ASCENT OF SUMMIT. You are now in the region of the perpetual snows of the Sierra Nevada. Very steep ascending road for half a mile, to

- $\frac{1}{2}$ THE SUMMIT of MOUNTAINS. Steep and rugged descent for two miles, to a

1687

2 VALLEY AND COLD SPRING.

Plenty of grass. It is from here four and a half miles to the

4½ FOOT OF SECOND VALLEY,

to crossing of Yuba river, over a very rough road, almost impassable in places for twenty-three miles, to

23 INTERVALE AND GRASS. On

the above road there is *no grass*, but plenty of cold water. Very steep descent six miles, to

6 BEAR RIVER VALLEY. Good

grass all the way. From this place, the left hand road passing down the valley, leads to Sacramento, *via* Steep Hollow Diggins. The right hand road over the mountains, passes, *via* Nevada City, to the same place. There is but little grass, by either road, until you reach Sacramento Valley, fifty miles from Bear River Valley descent. The distance to Sacramento City is about one hundred miles.

1722½—say about 1700 miles from Trader's Point on the Missouri River to Bear River Valley.



ADDITIONAL REMARKS.

Emigrants should be careful to take nothing which is not absolutely necessary, as all such articles will be thrown away when the journey is fairly entered upon. The value of property *left* on the California route in the season of 1850, was double that of the amount carried through. If you travel with a wagon, take a few extra bolts and nuts, a wrench, hammer, hatchet, &c., but no heavy or cumbrous tools. *Take no stove*; if you do, you will most likely leave it by the road side in a short time. Your camp utensils and water cans should be made *well*, but not of heavy material.

It will be advisable to take a small quantity of Lemon Acid; with the addition of this, you will be enabled to render the wa-

ters of the Humboldt River quite palatable. About half way from the head of this river to the Sink, the water has a brackish flavor, which grows worse till you arrive at the Sink, where it is decidedly salt. By adding a few drops of the lemon acid, the unpleasant taste is mostly overcome.

Near Scott's Bluffs, the Prickly Pear and Wild Sage make their appearance, and from here the emigrant will do well to make hay at every opportunity which offers. This will not perhaps be *absolutely necessary*, if you are early on the road, (except in those places described in the foregoing pages,) but if a large portion of the emigration is in advance of you, it will be a great saving to keep supplied with hay as much of the time as possible, as it will frequently save the trouble of driving from three to six miles off the road, (and sometimes more,) to find feed, which will be consumed and trodden down by those who have already passed.

The alkali pools and lakes, are, perhaps, the most dangerous enemy the emigrant can encounter. The water in these is a deadly poison to man and beast, and yet no indication of its quality can be discerned by the eye, as it is, in most cases, of a crystal clearness. In the immediate neighborhood of these pools, may frequently be seen, a fine, dry scum, or powder, on the ground, lying between the bunches of grass, and somewhat resembling hoar-frost.

The road via Salt Lake, is, for the most part, over a much more level country, than that via Bear River cut-off, but the sweep which it takes around the Lake, makes the distance considerably more. It has generally been estimated to be 150 miles further by the Salt Lake road; but a gentleman who went by that route in the spring of 1851, assures me there cannot be over 75 miles difference, and he thinks the road enough better to make up the difference

in distance. By taking this route, however, many of the most interesting sights of the whole journey are lost, such as steamboat springs, soda springs, the openings in the rocks, &c.

To those whose teams have become exhausted upon arriving at the junction of the Salt Lake road, (and more particularly if their teams consist of *horses*,) I would say go by Salt Lake ; for there you can get plenty of nourishing feed, and give your animals the rest they require, which will be more than made up to you before you get through. At the village of Salt Lake can be procured many little articles, which will be appreciated by the traveller, after his arduous journey from the frontier. Another great gain by this route is the avoidance of the *great desert*, from Big Sandy River to Green River, a barren waste of 54 miles.

The following is an extract of a letter from Mr. J. P. WELSH, of Milwaukee, who

made the overland trip in 1851. He took with him the manuscript copy of this Guide, and says :

" With regard to the " Guide " you furnished me, it has proved very accurate, and been mainly depended upon, though we have Mormon and other Guides, some quite minute and extensive. Even some who have crossed, have asked for copies of part."

Milwaukee, Wis., April, 1852.

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